

MRS. JANE VENABLE.

MARCH 30, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BARKSDALE, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of the members of the legislature of the State of Tennessee, in behalf of Mrs. Jane Venable, of Winchester, Tennessee, widow of Major William Edward Venable, deceased, late United States minister resident at the republic of Guatemala, submit the following report :

That the memorialists state that Major William Edward Venable "having been appointed by the present administration minister to Guatemala, died in the service of the country, without having received any part of his salary as we (the memorialists) are informed." They ask that his widow may "receive the salary to which he would have been entitled if he had lived, for one year at least."

Your committee on inquiry at the Department of State learn that an account was adjusted at the treasury on the 14th of June, 1858, in the name of T. T. Estell, administrator of W. E. Venable, showing that \$1,245 was due to the estate and was paid to Mr. Estell, making, in addition to \$618 13 before paid to Mr. Venable, the sum of \$1,863 13, as compensation pursuant to law, from the date of his appointment to the day of his death.

While your committee advocate the prompt adjustment and payment of all legal and equitable claims against the general government, they cannot recommend the award of gratuities or pensions, even when, as in the present case, the acceptance of a responsible civil position has, by the sudden decease of the functionary, been a source of pecuniary loss to those dependent on him for support. A recompense of these losses, or the award of a gratuity, however grateful it might be to the individual feelings of the members of your committee, would be in opposition to the spirit of our system of government. Your committee feel it a duty to recommend that the prayer of the memorialists be not granted.

